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Expert: 'Crimson' shows need for tighter nuke security

By Keay Davidson
SAN FRANCISCO EXAMINER

The new thriller "Crimson Tide" has been a box-office hit since it opened in mid-May, but its subject — the Navy — says it's all wet.

The film's premise is that a nuclear submarine commander could launch an atomic holocaust by mistake. No way, reply Navy officials, who refused to cooperate with the making of the film.

But critics say the film justly dramatizes the need for tighter control of submarine-based nuclear weapons. Even today, when the United States and Russia are ostensibly friends, a "Crimson Tide"-like nuclear scenario is imaginable, a top expert says. A few men led by a sub captain and his executive officer could launch nuclear weapons without authorization from the president or Pentagon, says Bruce Blair, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution.

"The Navy just doesn't want to get into that discussion — that our weapons may not be reasonably well controlled," charges Josh Handler of Greenpeace's disarmament campaign in Washington, D.C.

The film is set in the near future, during a civil war in Russia. Renegade Russian troops seize a Siberian military base and threaten to launch nukes at the United States. A U.S. sub commander (Gene Hackman) receives a message from the Pentagon ordering him to launch a preemptive nuclear strike on the Russian base.

Later another message starts to arrive, then is cut off when the sub loses radio contact with the Pentagon. Hackman's executive officer (Denzel Washington) says they should delay missile firings until they can reestablish contact with the Pentagon and learn if the second message ordered them to cancel the launches.

But Hackman insists they should abide by the first order and attack the Russians before they start shooting missiles at the United States. The two men struggle to take over the sub; much mayhem results.

There's no way a sub commander would launch nuclear missiles without clear orders from the president, said Navy spokesman Ken Ross at the Pentagon.

"The portrayal of military people in that film, and Navy people in particular, does not adequately or realistically (portray) the people in today's Navy," Ross said. "The personnel we have manning the ships are ... fully cognizant of their duties and have always performed superbly."

> *"The Navy just doesn't want to get into that discussion — that our weapons may not be reasonably well controlled."*
>
> **Josh Handler**
> **Greenpeace**

But the scenario of a nuclear war triggered by a Russian civil war isn't as remote as it sounds, said Blair, a leading expert on the command and control of nuclear weapons whose latest report, "Global Zero Alert for Nuclear Forces," was published by Brookings. In the 1970s he served as a launch officer at a Minuteman ICBM center run by the Strategic Air Command.

Blair notes that in 1992, U.S. officials conducted a classified "war game" with a similar premise — that a Russian civil war could draw in the United States. The simulated war eliminated with both sides exchanging several hundred nuclear warheads.

Following recommendations by a top-secret panel chaired by former U.N. Ambassador Jeane Kirkpatrick, the Navy plans to tighten controls over subs' nuclear weapons beginning next year, Blair says.

Starting next year, the Navy plans to equip subs with so-called "permissive action links," or PALs, a term for electronic techniques by which Washington authorizes military commanders to "arm" nuclear weapons prior to launch.

Currently, a sub commander can't arm missiles without using special keys locked in a safe, whose combination is known to designated crew members. Beginning next year, however, part of the combination will be secret and available only via special transmission from the Pentagon or other military authorities.

PALs aren't good enough, though, Blair says. He also advocates:

- Removing the sub missiles' guidance mechanisms and installing them on so-called attack submarines, which don't carry missiles. To launch its missiles, a sub would first have to retrieve the guidance systems from the attack subs.
- Removing Russian targets from missile computers so that they couldn't be re-targeted without elaborate steps. "Presidents (Boris) Yeltsin and (Bill) Clinton agreed last year to aim their weapons at the ocean instead of each other, but for now that can be reversed in seconds simply by turning a switch," Blair said.
- Moving subs from their so-called "launch stations" — areas of the ocean close to their targets. Despite the end of the Cold War, about a third of the sub fleet continues to hang around their launch stations, Blair says.
- Cutting back the size of the nuclear fleet. "We have about 14 Trident submarines now and about 70 percent of them are at sea at any given time. Each has 24 missiles and each missile has eight warheads ... And with nine submarines at sea, that's a total of 1,728 warheads."

Moon hit Earth and became satellite, researchers say

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — New evidence about lunar composition supports an old theory that the moon became a natural satellite of Earth after it smashed into the planet and then ricocheted back into orbit.

Paul G. Lucey of the University of Hawaii reports in a study that a research satellite called Clementine has shown that the bulk composition of the moon has less iron than previously believed and has a chemistry far different from Earth's. This, he said, eliminates two of the four theories about the moon's origin.

"We concluded that the moon did not form from the same source material as the Earth," Lucey said. "The moon is really quite different than the Earth in composition."

This means that only one theory, the "giant-impact" hypothesis, is most likely correct about the moon, he said.

The study was published in the latest issue of Science, the journal of the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

Graham Ryder, a staff scientist at the Lunar and Planetary Institute in Houston, said Lucey's study gives a big boost to the giant-impact theory of the moon's origin, but that more studies are needed before the theory is accepted as fact.

"The study is really excellent, but it doesn't prove the theory," Ryder said. "But giant impact is the only model we have that fits these data."

The four major theories for the moon's origin are:

- Co-accretion: The moon formed in the same place and of the same materials as Earth.
- Fission: The moon is a chunk of Earth that was broken away from the planet and propelled into orbit by an asteroid impact.
- Giant impact: The moon was a Mars-size rock that hit Earth; a large part, perhaps in the form of molten rock, ricocheted into an orbit about the planet.
- Capture: The moon was a huge rock that wandered into Earth's gravitational grasp and was captured in the planet's orbit.

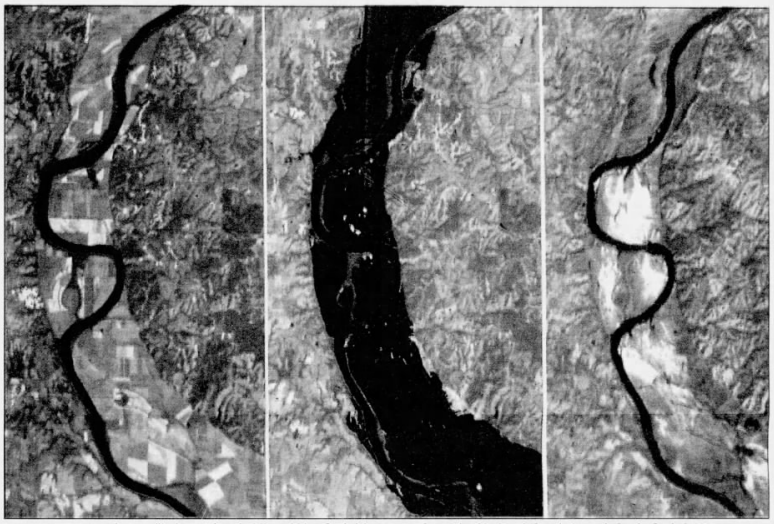
Lucey said that since the moon's composition is so different from Earth's, the co-accretion and fission theories would not be possible. The capture theory, he said, is generally rejected because computer simulations have shown it to be very unlikely.

"This study is consistent with the giant-impact model, but not for the (co-accretion or fission) theories," Ryder said. The capture theory, he added, "is supported by only a small minority" of the scientific community.

Lucey said instruments aboard the Clementine spacecraft measured the chemistry of about 93 percent of the moon's surface using instruments that gathered geochemical data with remote sensors.

PERSPECTIVES

a photographic look at the news



STUDYING THE DELUGE: *Three satellite images show the Missouri River flood plain upstream from Columbia, Mo., before, during and after the flood of 1993. The pre-flood photo (left) shows the checkerboard of farmer's fields built near the fertile river bed. After the devastating flood when the water breached the levees, sand was deposited (right), replacing topsoil.*

HOUSE *from A1*

scious" and takes his privacy seriously. Apparently, so do his ranch-hands and local residents, who have closed ranks around their new neighbor.

"We just don't interfere in people's lives out here," said Landon Store manager Addie Jo Smith.

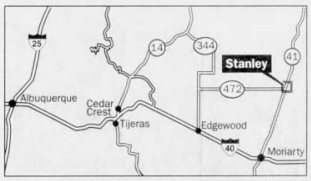
"We help people out when they want it, but when they want to be left alone, we leave them alone," she said.

Sure, Smith said, tourists and others are curious about the compound of eight or so salmon-colored buildings already visible at Zorro Ranch. The ranch is set back a half-mile west of N.M. 41 at the 45-mile marker, about 14 miles north of Moriarty and about an hour's drive east of Albuquerque.

The buildings include a bunkhouse, horse stable, hay barn, greenhouse, and office and storage buildings. A "No Trespassing" sign posted at the main gate warns violators that they will be prosecuted.

"People come in, tourists or whatever, and want to know what the pink buildings are, if it's a town or whatever," Smith said. "We say, 'No, a man's building a building and we don't know anything about it.' We just don't say much about it because we don't know anything."

Despite his yen for privacy, Epstein



revealed a few details about his home. He said it will be a Spanish-style house with up to 30,000 square feet, although plans aren't final.

His spread will also include an 18-by-40-foot swimming pool, he said, and a "grass strip" to land single-engine planes.

He said construction on the house will start soon.

"It's just a normal home," he said, adding that he believes a larger home exists somewhere in Santa Fe.

Despite declining to grant a tour of his spread to a Tribune reporter for this article, Epstein provided these few facts about himself: He's a bachelor who's fond of Evian water. He shops at Wild Oats in Santa Fe. His friends mail him a special seven-grain bread from Zabar's in New York City.

"People constantly send me my favorite foods from New York," Epstein said. "It's a New York version of a care package. They view New Mexico as somewhat desolate.

"I'm pretty much of a hermit, I'm afraid," said Epstein, whose favorite area restaurant was the former Legal Tender in Lamy, near Santa Fe.

Current and former Zorro ranch hands say they have been sworn to secrecy. And some say they have been required to sign confidentiality agreements barring them from discussing details about the project or its owner.

So all this secrecy has prompted speculation.

- One rumor: That the ranch's owner was the head of Victoria's Secret. That connection is explained by the fact that the popular mail-order catalog company and women's lingerie store, which has two stores in Albuquerque, is one of several subsidiaries of The Limited Inc., Wexner's company.
- There's also talk among real estate agents that the land would be subdivided into two-acre parcels as part of a housing development. But Epstein said no development is planned.

Epstein said the entire project will cost "not much more than $5 million." However, an area real estate agent said a woman who answered the telephone at Zorro Ranch told him the project would top $50 million once fully developed.

Stanley landowner Glen Veretto, owner of Realty Executives Inc., said Epstein's estimated 5,000-acre land purchase alone would be about $5 million because land sells for about $1,000 an acre in the area.

Epstein said he employs "two or three" full-time employees at the ranch and will use "as many local laborers as it takes" to build the house.

Landon Store manager Smith said two of Epstein's workers come in to buy hardware such as pipe fittings, shovels and rakes.

Epstein said he'd like to spend as much time as he can in Stanley — up to six months a year. He said he also rents or owns homes in New York City; Boston; West Palm Beach, Fla.; and Columbus, Ohio.

"I think New Mexico is the prettiest, most spectacular state by a long shot," Epstein said.

An employee of a former Zorro Ranch contractor said the setting is breathtaking.

"It overlooks a canyon and a valley. You can see all the way to Santa Fe," said Bev Reese, a secretary at Kloetko-rn-Hallard Construction Development Inc., which worked on constructing the ranch earlier this year.

But Reese said the company pulled out for "lack of work."

"(Epstein) couldn't finalize the plans for the house, so we just sold out of it," Reese said. "Obviously we couldn't have a crew and equipment out there with nothing to do. We never had a chance to bid on the main house."

Reese said she believes the house, with its elaborate stonework and woodwork, will end up in "all the architectural digests at some point."

Epstein's home will join those of other wealthy notables with homes in New Mexico, such as Ted Turner and Jane Fonda, Oprah Winfrey, Dennis Hopper, Gene Hackman, Brian Dennehey, Val Kilmer and Sam Donaldson.

JUNKET *from A1*

Francisco Hilton from May 30 to June 3.

The trip cost taxpayers $16,960, according to a Health Department document.

State Health Secretary J. Alex Valdez on Wednesday called the conference "a very sophisticated training program."

He said no one in New Mexico offers the type of specialized training that the conference provided. And the 19 people traveled on special two-for-one airfares, officials said.

But Valdez said neither he nor anyone else in the department knew Martinez was a convicted felon facing imprisonment until Friday.

"Why did a convicted felon go on the trip? That's a good question," Valdez said.

"I don't think anybody knew about his background in that regard until we saw it in a press clipping."

An Albuquerque Journal article last Wednesday reported Martinez's sentencing. By then, Martinez and his 18 co-workers were already in San Francisco, according to Health Department documents and department officials.

Martinez's federal court file contains a letter of reference signed by Tobey, addressed to Martinez's attorney and dated Feb. 15, the same day Martinez signed a plea bargain with federal prosecutors. Martinez's attorney used the letter in a request for leniency, court documents show.

"Mr. Martinez came to me and said he had problems with the IRS and he was attempting to pay them back," Tobey said. "He told me he owed them money and he needed me to verify his employment and his job performance."

She said Martinez wrote the letter that she signed.

Valdez said he questioned one of Martinez's supervisors on Tuesday and was informed that Martinez would be submitting his resignation.

Valdez also said he will ask his legal office to determine whether the department can force Martinez to reimburse the state.

Department records show that Martinez was given an advance of $340 toward the $425 in per diem that the state allowed for the five-day trip.

His $200 air fare plus his $220 conference fees were paid by the department in advance.

Martinez was hired by the state Health Department in March 1994.

From July 1989 to July 1992, he was the office administrator of Medical Arts Clinic in Lubbock, court documents show.

In charges filed in federal court in Lubbock in October 1994 Martinez was accused of one count of filing a false tax return for the year 1990. The charge alleged he underreported his income by nearly $75,000 that year.

In a plea bargain, however, Martinez acknowledged that he had embezzled $261,873.

He pleaded guilty to filing a false tax return on Feb. 15 in a federal court in Albuquerque.

Because he has four young children, the judge allowed him to remain free until the school year begins at the end of August to lessen child care costs.

As a result of Martinez's San Francisco trip, Valdez said he will initiate a new policy to require that all future out-of-state travel be approved by him.

"I don't like surprises," he said.

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Changing times

Robert Reed is the man — er, woman — of the hour Sunday during TNT's reruns of "Medical Center." Please see TV Week, Page ***TV3.***

B1 **Hockey here?**
State Fair will ice shady deals, John O'Rourke says.

C1 **Going mobile**
New Mexicans turn to mobile homes as affordable housing.

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Convicted official takes one last junket

The health department manager flew off on a state-paid, five-day trip to San Francisco just a few hours after being sentenced to a federal prison term.

By Ed Asher
TRIBUNE REPORTER

Hours after being sentenced to 18 months in a federal prison, a state Department of Health administrator boarded a flight to San Francisco for a five-day convention at taxpayers' expense, according to documents and department officials.

A federal judge sentenced Michael A. Martinez to 1½ years in prison for income tax evasion at 1:15 p.m. on May 30, court documents show.

Martinez boarded a 7 p.m. flight to San Francisco for a five-day health-care training conference, Health Department officials confirmed.

"It's an amazing story," said Martinez's boss, Toni Tobey, deputy director of the Health Department's Developmental Disabilities Division.

Martinez didn't have much time to use the information he got at the five-day conference on working with mentally retarded people. He quit Thursday morning and walked out of his Santa Fe office.

Martinez had been a health-care manager with the Developmental Disabilities Division.

His bosses say they didn't know about Martinez's legal problemns when they approved his travel on April 25 and will now try to recover some of the $845 spent on Martinez's trip.

Tobey, his immediate boss, signed a letter in February attesting to his job performance. Tobey said she was unaware the letter was later introduced in court by Martinez's attorney in the tax evasion case.

In a court document, Martinez acknowledged he embezzled $261,873 from a Lubbock, Texas, medical clinic from 1989 to 1992 and failed to report the "ill-gotten gains" on his federal income tax returns.

The judge allowed Martinez, 39, to remain free on his own recognizance until the end of August, when he is scheduled to surrender to U.S. Marshals.

The Tribune was unable to reach Martinez for comment this week.

Records show that he was one of 19 state Health Department employees who attended the national conference of the American Association on Mental Retardation held at the San

Please see **JUNKET/A9**

A mysterious stranger has come to Stanley. His exact plans aren't known, but apparently he's building the largest home in New Mexico.

Ted L. Jumey/TRIBUNE

THE MAIN GATE to the Zorro Ranch near Stanley warns trespassers they will be prosecuted. A New York financier, Jeffrey E. Epstein, bought about 5,000 acres of King family land and is building what may be New Mexico's largest house.

THE BIG HOUSE

By Shonda Novak
TRIBUNE REPORTER

STANLEY — Life in this tightknit town of 25 people meanders by like the vast, rolling grasslands surrounding it.

Townsfolk pass the hours shooting the breeze at Landon Store, the old-fashioned country store that opened in 1933. The store — the only business here except for the cubbyhole-size U.S. Post Office for the town's 200 to 250 neighboring residents — still sells old Gulf products, Vel laundry soap, hand-forged wrought iron, tobacco grinders and antique barbed wire.

The most excitement in the area comes when a movie is made, such as "Wyatt Earp" and "Fire Next Time," or a commercial or music video is shot.

But not since the last movie have people had so much to talk about as they do now.

A New York financier is building what may very well be New Mexico's largest house on about 5,000 acres of what used to be part of the King estate.

Former Gov. Bruce King and his brothers sold the ranch land, now known as the Zorro Ranch, to Jeffrey E. Epstein in 1993. Epstein said he plans to build a $2.5 million to $3 million vacation home on the ranch.

Epstein said he is president of Jeffrey Epstein & Co., a money management firm. Epstein won't divulge who the firm's clients are.

Epstein has ties to Leslie Wexner, founder and chairman of The Limited Inc., a $7.3 billion women's and men's apparel chain based in Columbus, Ohio. Epstein said he was formerly an officer at Lewex Inc., an investment company owned solely by Limited Inc. founder and chair Leslie Wexner, and has served as president of Wexner's investment company.

Epstein said he's "very security-con-

Please see **HOUSE/A9**

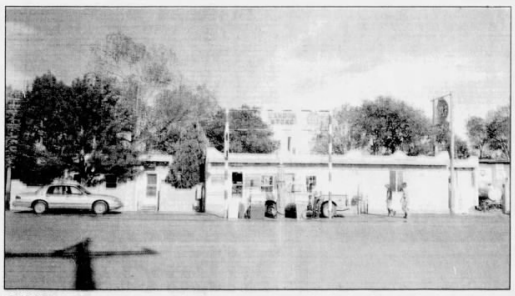
THE LAND DEAL

- Jeffrey E. Epstein bought about 5,000 acres of King family land under the name Zorro Trust and New York Trust, title records show. Epstein legally took title to the property March 8, 1993.
- The New Mexico Construction Industries Division, a state licensing and regulatory agency, says Zorro Development has a general contractor's license but has not yet submitted an application for a building permit. Epstein says he plans to get a permit soon. The agency's records list Epstein as owner/partner of Jeffrey Epstein & Co.
- Epstein also is listed in State Corporation Commission records in Santa Fe as the president, secretary and treasurer of Zorro Development Corp., a real estate development company based in Dover, Del.

"ONE HELL OF A BIG HOUSE"

Build a 30,000-square-foot house in the middle of WayOutThere, call it the Zorro Ranch, and people are bound to notice.
And talk. Here are a few comments:

- "I've never heard of a house that big in the counties I've worked in (Taos, San Miguel, Bernalillo and Santa Fe), and I've seen some very large deals. That size of a house tops them all." — **Craig Stokes, title examiner** at Santa Fe's Territorial Abstract & Title Co., which handled Epstein's transaction.
- "He's building one hell of a big house up there on top of the hill. Anybody can see that." — **Stanley-area landowner Bob Stitt**
- "I guess he just likes New Mexico, like a lot of people, and likes to see the open spaces." — **Former Gov. Bruce King,** whose ranch surrounds Epstein's and whose family sold Epstein the 5,000 acres.



THE LANDON STORE is the only business in Stanley except for a U.S. post office. The Zorro Ranch is a few miles north of the old-fashioned country store, which opened in 1933.

College may help Duke City Croatian

The Eldorado High exchange student could be forced to fight in the war if he returns home. An alternative may reside at a Catholic university in Ohio.

By Gilbert Gallegos
TRIBUNE REPORTER

With some of his clothes already packed, 18-year-old Vladimir Pelan had finally convinced himself that he would have to go back to Croatia.

Maybe. Maybe not.

The Croatian exchange student graduated from Eldorado High School in May. His visa expires in July. As much as his parents in Croatia want him to stay away from the bloody civil war there and attend college here, it just didn't seem possible.

Then a phone call from a private Catholic college in Ohio gave him new hope.

A school official from the Franciscan University of Steubenville read a Tribune article about Pelan's plight and called the teen-ager to offer help. The official didn't make any promises, Pelan said, but the school might by able to provide a combination of scholarships and private money from benefactors so Pelan can afford the $20,000 tuition.

HOW TO HELP

Donations may be sent to the Vladimir Pelan College Fund at the Sandia Laboratory Federal Credit Union, 3707 Juan Tabo Blvd. N.E., Albuquerque, 87111.

Please see **VLADIMIR/A5**

Lab took corpse parts without consent

For years, Los Alamos National Laboratory scientists received body parts from corpses from across the country for use in a project that studied plutonium content in the human body.

More than 100 of those bodies came from people who died in northern New Mexico.

Now, years later, family members reveal to The Tribune that they never gave scientists permission to use their loved ones in the study.

Please see Page **A11.**

Deer hoofs it through airport

Kansas City Star

KANSAS CITY, Mo. — Travelers in a hurry come racing through the Terminal C at Kansas City International Airport on a daily basis.

But few are as panicked as the one that customer service agent Diane Crowell encountered.

"I have no idea where it came from, but I looked up, and there was a deer running down the hall of the terminal a mile a minute," Crowell said. "It charged up to the ticket counter and almost knocked over a little kid along the way."

The 4-foot-tall animal had found its way to the terminal's automatic doors around 7 a.m. Wednesday, and once inside, took off running.

"It was crazy. Everyone was screaming, and the deer was scared to death," Crowell said.

The deer finally ran into an office near Northwest Airlines' ticket counter. Employees quickly closed the door. Within an hour, animal-control workers arrived and tranquilized the deer. It was later released in a more rural setting.

Roving deer aren't unusual this time of year. In June, many young deer leave their mothers and wander around in search of a new home, biologists say.

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